Topfield TF7700HSCI

Elegant HDTV PVR Receiver with Extras

In the last several issues of TELE-satellite we had already introduced HD compatible receivers from the high-end manufacturer Topfield, in particular the top model TF7700HDPVR with twin tuners, PVR function and integrated hard drive (issue 03/2008).

Topfield heard all of these wishes and developed their new model TF7700HSCI: a single-tuner HDTV DVB-S2 receiver. The rear panel comes with a USB host connector to be used with an external hard drive or USB memory stick.

The manufacturer quickly recognized that there are many consumers who are not TV coach potatoes and don't necessarily need to have two tuners. That number could go even higher if the recorded programs with the aid of an external hard drive could be played back in different locations such as a second receiver in the bedroom, in the weekend cabin, on vacation, while camping, etc. You could even use more than one external hard drive in order to build up a small video archive or put some organization in your existing video archive.

Record you favorites television programmes into an external hard disk drive via the USB port

Otherwise the TF7700HSCI is a CI receiver that can handle DVB-S, DVB-S2-QPSK and DVB-S2-8PSK.

The TF7700HSCI is a visually appealing receiver. It comes delivered in a flat and black-colored 43cm wide chassis that fits perfectly in almost every TV rack. An extremely easy-to-read VFD display sits prominently in the center of the front panel that shows the current channel number and, while in standby mode, displays the current time.

Five buttons let you operate the receiver without the remote control and two CI slots hidden behind a flap are compatible with every possible module (Irdeto, Seca, Conax, Viaccess, Cryptoworks, Nagravision, etc.).

Even looking at the rear panel will put a smile on your

face: in addition to the HDMI connection that you would expect to find on an HDTV receiver, there are also two Scart jacks as well as six RCA jacks for stereo audio, video and YUV outputs, an optical digital audio output, an RS-232 interface, a USB 2.0 host connection and, of course, an IF input with looped-through output.

Topfield also included a small switch on the rear panel that lets you select if the output of the video signal is sent to the HDMI, YUV or Scart connectors and thus matches the settings in the main menu.

The included remote control sits nicely in your hand and is clearly labeled. Our test receiver also came with a very detailed user manual written in English; naturally, for each of the different country versions, a translation is provided.

Everyday Use

When turning on the receiver for the first time, the main menu is displayed that cannot be closed until all of the basic settings have been taken care of and a channel scan has been completed. A preprogrammed channel list that would have somewhat simplified the initial installation was not available.

The included satellite list encompasses 143 European, Asian and American satellites. The manufacturer finally listened to the endless criticism they received for the old satellite and transponder list and performed an overhaul such that now nearly every HD channel can be found on all of the known satellite positions. Let's not forget that new HD channels appear at different positions every week that understandably have not yet been programmed into the receiver. We can't really blame the manufacturer for that.

Fortunately, it is actually quite easy to add new satellite and transponder data; it is also just as simple to edit the existing data. As with all the other Topfield receivers, the TF7700HSCI supports the DiSEqC 1.0, 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3 (USALS) protocols and can therefore be used as well with the simplest multifeed combination, a DiSEqC motorized system or up to a 16 LNB WaveFrontier antenna.

A wide assortment of local oscillator frequencies (LOFs) for the C-band and Ku-band are already preprogrammed into the receiver. If you intend to use an S-band antenna with the TF7700HSCI, it would be no problem thanks to manual LOF entry.

Once the receiver has been matched to your specific antenna, the next step is a channel scan. In typical Topfield fashion, just about four minutes was needed to scan and load all the channels on a 110 transponder satellite.

Of course, in addition to the automatic channel scan, there's also a manual scan as well as the ability to manually enter PIDs for those more seasoned users.

If desired, a network scan can also be activated; in this way you can be sure that the receiver will find every possible channel even if the programming providers had decided to alter the arrangement of channels on the various transponders.

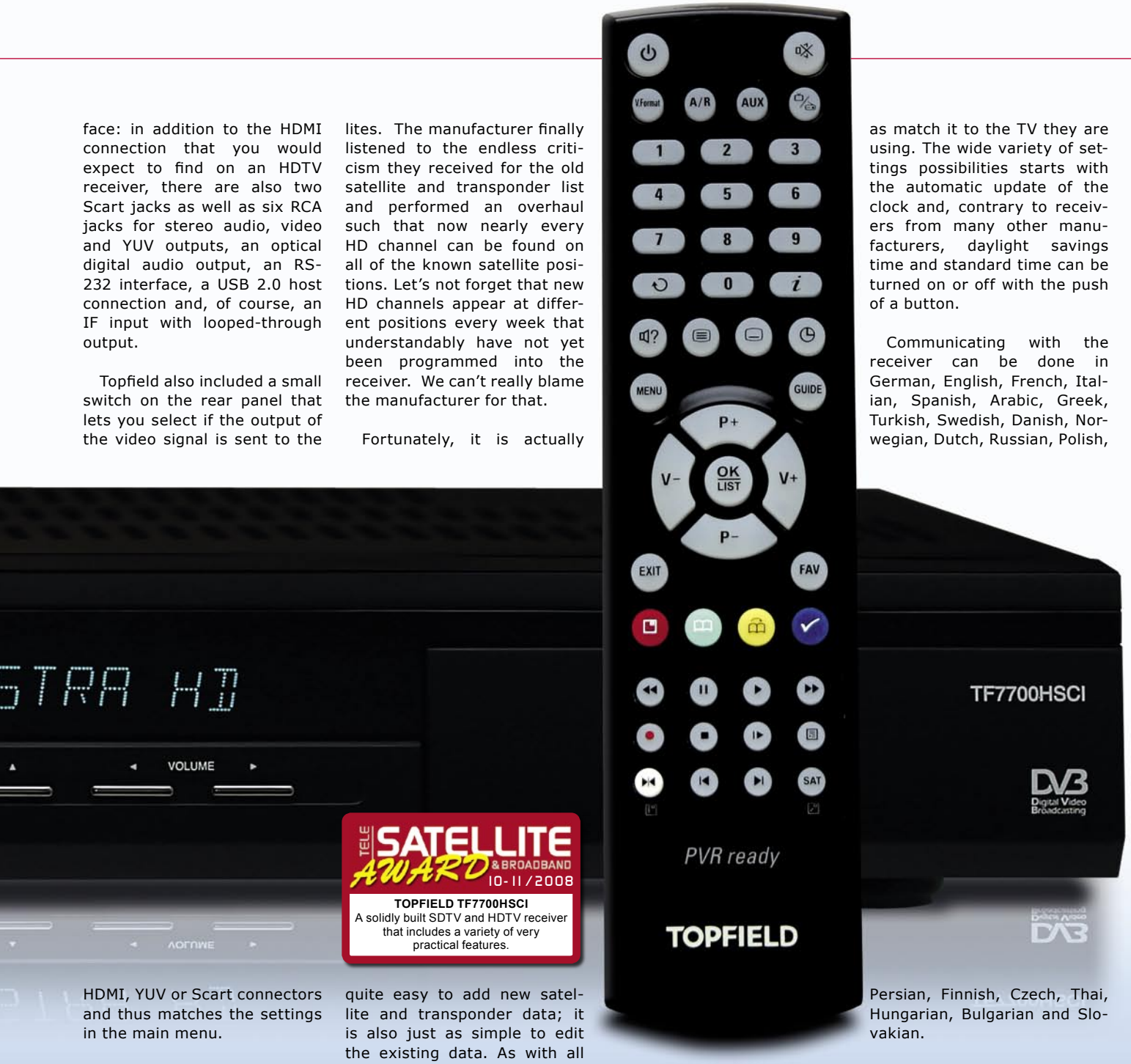
In the System Settings, the user can adapt the receiver to their requirements as well as match it to the TV they are using. The wide variety of settings possibilities starts with the automatic update of the clock and, contrary to receivers from many other manufacturers, daylight savings time and standard time can be turned on or off with the push of a button.

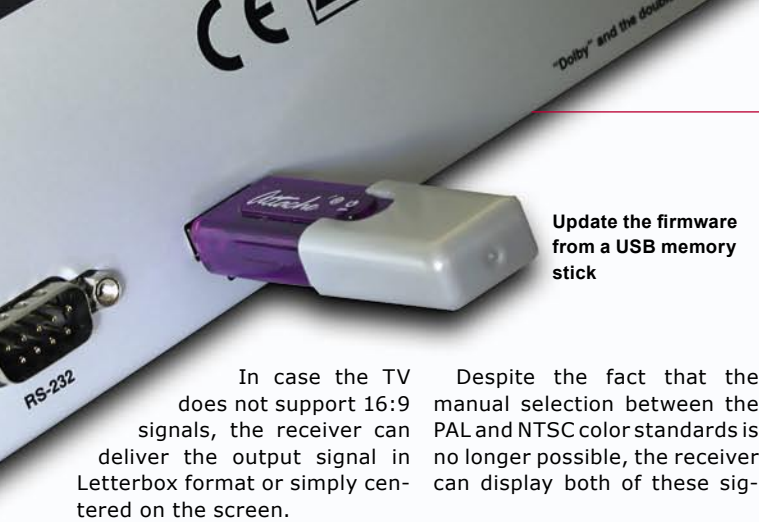
Communicating with the receiver can be done in German, English, French, Italian, Spanish, Arabic, Greek, Turkish, Swedish, Danish, Norwegian, Dutch, Russian, Polish, Persian, Finnish, Czech, Thai, Hungarian, Bulgarian and Slovakian.

Additional settings include a variety of OSD settings options as well as options for the A/V output signal.

If the DIP switches on the rear panel set the video output to HDMI and/or YUV, the Scart output will only have S-Video or CVBS. If these switches are set to Scart, then RGB will also be available at the Scart output.

Even though more and more programming providers are making their content available in 16:9 format, there are still plenty of broadcasters that still use the older 4:3 format. The TF7700HSCI lets the user choose whether to view these channels in zoomed mode to fill the entire TV screen or with black bands to the left and right of the video image.





Update the firmware from a USB memory stick

In case the TV does not support 16:9 signals, the receiver can deliver the output signal in Letterbox format or simply centered on the screen.

But it should be fairly safe to assume that no user will use this receiver on a standard 4:3 TV.

In the Video Format menu, the user can select the resolution of the HDMI output signal (1080i, 720p, 576i or 576p) or the choice can be left up to the receiver itself based on the incoming signal by choosing Auto for this menu selection. This function is actually quite practical since a standard SD signal, that would otherwise be given an improved 1080i resolution through the use of a scaler, would appear foggy and washed out and thus choosing 576i or 576p would be the right choice.

The automatic signal switching performed exactly as it should during our tests; the receiver immediately recognized the high-quality HD signal from ORF1 HD and the correct resolution of 720p was selected. When the receiver was switched to an SD channel, the TF7700HSCI instantly activated 576p.

Even the 1080i resolution on the HD channels of a German PayTV provider were effortlessly recognized and matched by the receiver. The video format can conveniently by changed by pushing a single button on the remote control.

Despite the fact that the manual selection between the PAL and NTSC color standards is no longer possible, the receiver can display both of these signals without any problems. For DXer's this is great news: they won't have any trouble receiving feeds from the US.

As with most of the other Topfield receivers, the TF7700HSCI can also store only 5000 TV and radio channels; for a CI receiver with DiSEqC 1.3, this is clearly not enough.

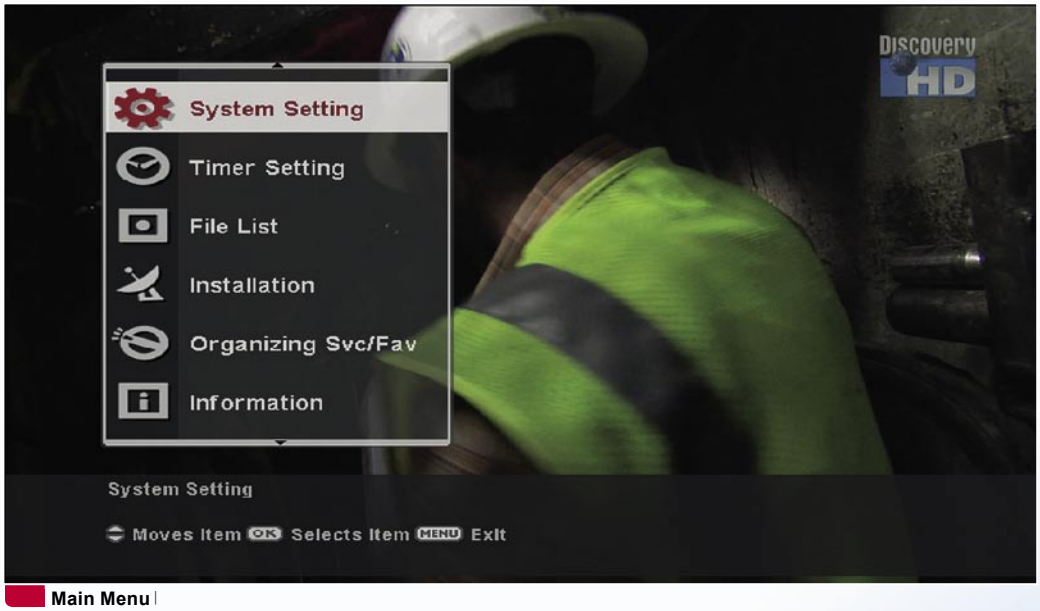
Because of the limited channel memory capacity, efficiently editing the channel list is even more critical. It would seem that Topfield put a lot of work into editing the channel list – users can easily delete, move or rename channels or lock them out with a PIN code. Channels that are watched more often can be quickly moved into one of the freely selectable Favorites lists and can then be accessed with the push of a single button. The System Restore function is an extremely practical feature. The user can take a complete snapshot of all the settings, the Channel and Favorites lists, satellite data, etc. and save this information as often as needed. Should there ever be a problem or if something went wrong with a setting, the original configuration can quickly be restored. The receiver would then be back to its original state with all of the correct settings in place.

Once all of the initial settings have been taken care of, the Exit button will take you out of the Main Menu and the receiver will then switch to the first channel in the list.

As we have come to expect from Topfield, a very informative Info bar appears that provides EPG information on the current program, the time, information on the channel (teletext, encryption, subtitles, multifeed, etc.) as well as transponder data. A second push of the Info button provides more detailed information on the current program assuming of course that this data is made available by the provider. Information on upcoming programming is delivered by the Guide button.

The TF7700HSCI quickly builds a complete overview of all the programming and by pressing the OK button timer settings can be handled directly from the EPG while the current program is visible in a small window (even with HD channels).

A push of the OK button displays the channel list that with



Main Menu

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Turkish	Türkçe	www.TELE-satellite.com/TELE-satellite-0811/tur/topfield.pdf

Available online starting from 26 September 2008

the help of the colored function buttons on the remote can be sorted or limited to specific satellites.

The time to switch between two HD channels is just under two seconds; the channel switching time is faster between SD channels.

Because of the automatic adjustment of the picture resolution, the time to switch between HDTV and SDTV channels can be as high as three or four seconds depending on the TV. If this is too long for you, simply turn off the automatic resolution function and change the resolution manually as needed with the remote control.

The Topfield manufactured tuner left us with a very good impression; it can easily handle weaker signals such as can be found on BADR 26° east, NILESAT 7° west or ASTRA 2D 28.2° east.

Unfortunately, we could not find any technical data on the tuner in the user manual so we had to conduct our SCPC test without any range data from the manufacturer to compare to. Our tests revealed that reception is possible only with symbolrates starting at roughly 2.0 Ms/sec.

We were especially pleased with the HDTV reception test; it performed perfectly and without any erratic video or crashes. We looked at various HDTV channels at different satellite positions and, regardless if it was FTA or encrypted, the TF7700HSCI did not have any problems with any of the channels.

Up to this point, the TF7700HSCI was similar in function to other HD receivers, but this is where the similarities come to an end: the integrated USB 2.0 host connection.

For our tests we connected a Seagate FreeAgent Pro hard drive and a 4GB USB memory stick. As soon as each device was connected, and this can even be done while the receiver is operating, the TF7700HSCI immediately recognized the new storage medium and, just like that, multiple PVR functions such as Record and Play instantly became available.

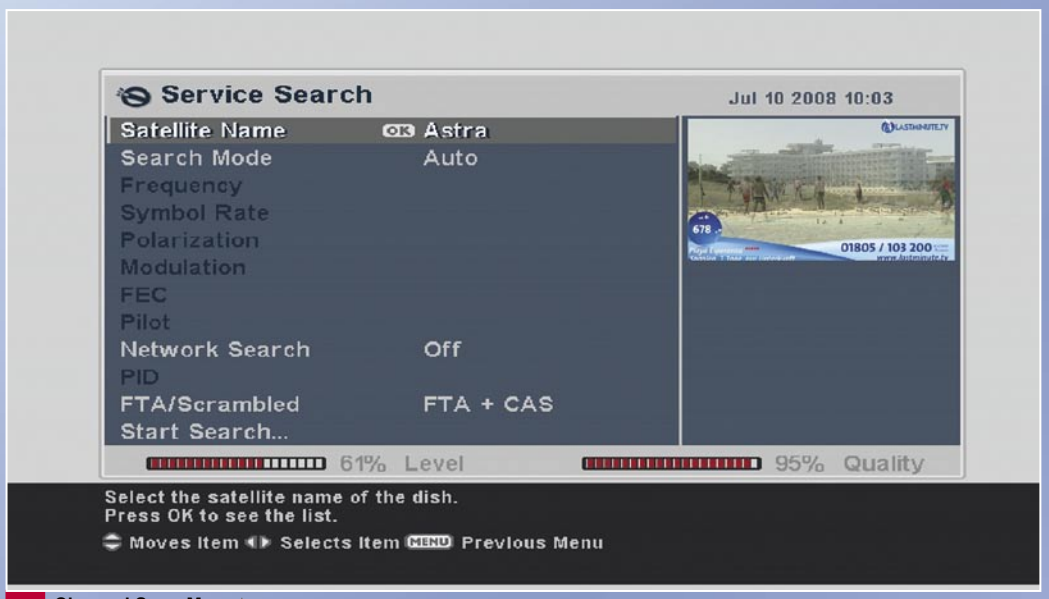
While one channel is being recorded (even an HD channel), all the other channels on the same transponder (again, even HD channels) are available to be viewed live. It is also possible to record one channel and watch a previously recorded channel at the same time.

Despite the extreme load we put on the receiver, we could not detect any interference or other hiccups during recording and playback.

In general, we could not detect any difference in performance compared to receivers with built-in hard drives; this lets the user take full advantage of an external storage device and gives them the flexibility to swap external devices or bring them with you to another location.

The recorded programs on the external hard drive or USB stick can also be played back on a PC without any problems or with the proper tools can be burned to a DVD. Even HD recorded programs did not give our computer any difficulties.

Topfield is constantly at work improving their products. New software updates can be uploaded into the receiver either via satellite, through the USB stick or through the serial interface. This makes it very easy for the user to keep the software in the receiver up to date.



Channel Scan Menu

Expert Opinion

Thomas Haring
TELE-satellite
Test Center
Austria

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The TF7700HSCI is a solidly built SDTV and HDTV receiver that includes a variety of very practical features. Add to that the logically laid out and easy to understand OSD and you have a perfect everyday satellite receiver for the entire family.

The HDTV reception in DVB-S2 mode based on the H.264 standard functioned properly and thanks to the HDMI output, these super-clear signals can easily be connected to a plasma or LCD TV. With the help of the USB 2.0 interface and an external hard drive or USB memory stick, the TF7700HSCI becomes a full-powered PVR machine whose recordings can easily be taken anywhere and just as easily be played back directly on a PC.

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The channel memory only has room for 5000 channels and a main power switch on the rear panel would also be practical.

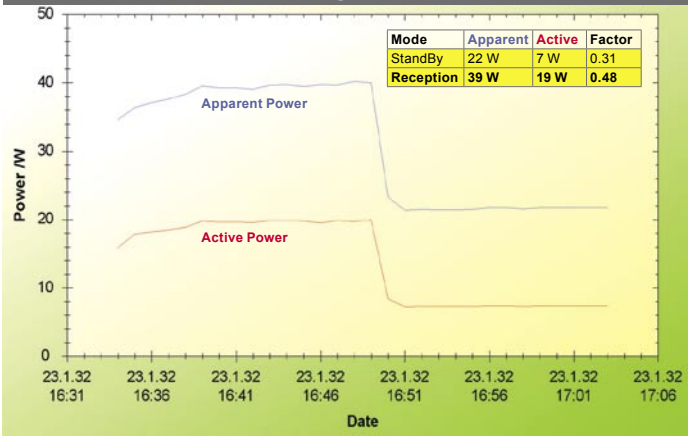
TECHNIC

DATA

Manufacturer	Topfield, Seongnam/Korea
Fax	+82-31-7082607
E-Mail	inquiry@topfield.co.kr
Model	TF7700HSCI
Function	Digital Satellite Receiver for SDTV/HDTV in DVBS and DVBS2 (QPSK/8PSK) MPEG2 and MPEG4
Channel Memory	5000
Symbolrate	2-45 Ms/sec.
SCPC Compatible	yes
DiSEqC	1.0 / 1.1 / 1.2 / 1.3
USALS	yes
HDMI Connection	yes
Scart Connectors	2
Audio/Video Output	3 x RCA
Component Output	3x RCA
S-Video Output	no
UHF Modulator	no
Programmable 0/12 Volt	no
Digital Audio Output	yes
EPG	yes
C/Ku-Band Compatible	yes
PVR Function	yes (via external USB 2.0 storage medium)
Power Supply	90-250 VAC, 50/60 Hz
Dimensions	43/26.5/6cm
Weight	2.9kg

ENERGY

DIAGRAM



First 15 Minutes: Active Operation with Channel Switching, Recording, Playback, etc. Second 15 Minutes: Standby

Info Bar

Program Guide
10:03, 10/07/2008 (Thu)
334 DISC HD
Die größten Proje..(1/3)
Der LA-Wassertunnel Danny Forster ist eigentlich Architekturstudent. Doch statt Theorie zu büffeln, will er lieber praktische Erfahrungen sammeln und sieht sich
09:45 ~ 10:36 10/07 (Thu) Die größten Projekte der Welt
10:35 ~ 11:25 Die größten Projekte der Welt
11:25 ~ 12:20 Destination
12:20 ~ 12:45 Unearthed - Tierfilmer gesucht 2
12:45 ~ 13:15 Unearthed - Tierfilmer gesucht 2
13:15 ~ 14:05 American Chopper
Toggle EPG Type
Previous Day
Next Day
Next Info Page
Next/Previous Services
Information
preselect/record/cancel
record/record by timer/cancel

Expanded EPG

Channel List with Options Menu

Recording of HD Programs

Overview of Previously Recorded Programs